

Summer Membership Seminar Seasoned Track

Vermont-NEA

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Your reality?

What are the **top two** challenges facing your Association next year in terms of membership? (recruitment issues, engagement, organizational issues, etc)

Service vs. Organizing Model

- NEA plays both roles, but emphasis is on organizing model. Trade unions tend to be service based.
- Democratic, bottom up organization
- Services provided by staff, protections, insurances, etc.
- Organizing model is engaging members in their own workplace and Association.
- Builds strength, readies Association to respond to issue, helps with membership recruitment, creates pipeline for new leaders.
- If only offer services, fosters passive membership.



Three Organizing Theories for your Toolbox



- **Appreciative Inquiry**
- **Issue Organizing**
- **Relational Organizing**

Appreciative Inquiry

Source: The Thin Book of Appreciative Inquiry by Sue Annis Hammond

- A philosophy for change.
- Assumes that in every organization, something works and change can happen through identifying what works and analyzing how to do more of what works.
- A process that is ever changing and involves every member adding to the process.
- Alternative to looking at problems and solving problems. By focusing on problems we emphasize and amplify problems.
- Appreciative Inquiry has people focus on what works. This energizes people and affirms people's commitment and confidence in organization.

Issue Organizing

- A process used to move people to action based on an issue that motivates members
- Creates power and empowerment
- Appeals to self-interests
- Develops sustainability
- Builds organizational capacity
- Harnesses power of collective action
- Achieves change that will benefit members

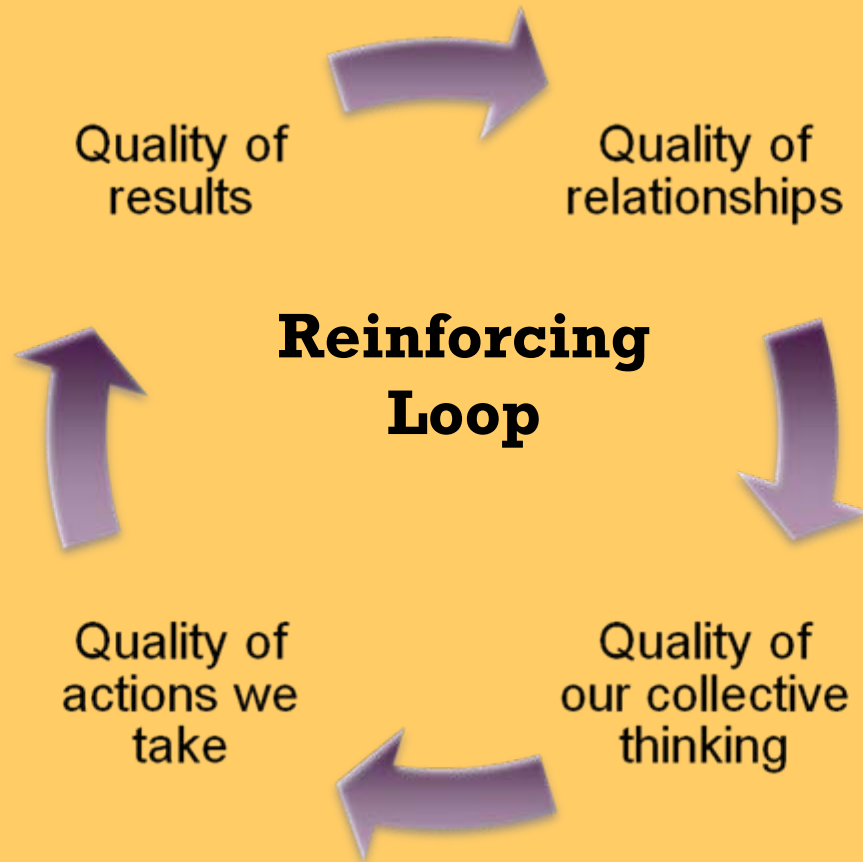
Issue Organizing

- There is a difference between an issue and a problem. Problems are long-term conditions that give rise to issues. We are concerned about problems; we take on issues.
- Chronic unemployment is a problem; an announcement of a 50-day layoff is an issue.
- Must clearly identify the issue so it can focus members and motivate them to action.

Relational Organizing

- This is the type of organizing where a connection is made on a personal level. It focuses on stories, values and beliefs of the members, surfaces their self-interests and links them to organization.
- Focuses on listening and respecting people's experiences and stories
- Identifies and recruits leaders
- Creates an agenda that is driven by the issues, lives and experiences of the members
- Relational meetings take time and thought. Go past the level of talking about what people do to why do they do what they do.
- Creates human connection to work of association.

Core Theory of Success



Activity: Scanning the Horizon

- Divide into groups
- Each group will take a “challenge”
- Build a campaign (using the planning grid) on how to address the issue
- Consider:
 - a) How does this issue impact membership?
 - b) How does this issue impact the Association?
 - c) What can the Association do to address this issue?
 - d) What steps/strategies can be taken?
 - e) List the strengths and challenges that exist for the Association. What resources do you have and what barriers exist to achieving your goal?
 - f) What do you need to be successful?

Think Tank Time

Access the knowledge
in the room....



Hot Tips for Campaigns

- **Understand your Association's capacity and priorities**
Begin with your strengths. We spend too much energy focused on problems and limitations instead of strengths. "easier to expand your islands vs. tackle the ocean".
- **Leaders don't emerge and members don't get more involved without a reason/issue**
- **The issue needs to activate people and reflect the membership**
- **View your members as assets not liabilities**
We are not resourceful enough. Look around and see all the resources around you. Members are assets.
- **Associations must have strong communication and motivational leadership**

Hot Tips for campaigns

- The “ask” for help needs to be strategic and purposeful General pleas won’t work. Target who you ask based on who connects with the issue most.
- Make small asks of many
Look for opportunities to build relationships vs. having very few people working to solve everyone’s problems.
- Find the personality for the task
- Break down tasks for all levels and time
- Recognize and thank people
- Train and support volunteers
- Be transparent with job duties
- Run good meetings*
- Think big and start small.
- “water your flowers....don’t pee on your posies”

Thank you!

- Questions
- Evaluations
- Membership materials survey

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